

Spastics News



Executive Council accepts new proposals

Shake-up for the Centres

The Society's Centres Department, which cares for 860 residents in 33 units across England and Wales, and spends over £7 million a year, is to have a new management structure.

At its meeting on 27 September, the Executive Council approved 18 recommendations put forward by Tim Yeo, the Director, and John Belcher, Director of Social Services.

The changes will come into force on 1 January 1984.

One aim is to establish a clear line of responsibility from the head of the department down to managers of residential units. New jobs will be created, and others will be abolished.

The jobs to go are Head of Centres, Adult Education Adviser and Senior Residential Services Officers. Present incumbents will be offered early retirement or redeployment within the department.

Replacing them will be a Residential and Day Care Services Manager, based in London, who will report to the Director of Social Services, and three Area

Managers, each based in a local unit, who will be responsible for residential and day care centres grouped in the north, south and east of the country. Wardens will be directly responsible to area managers for the efficient running of their units and the total care of their residents. Area meetings will be held every two months.

A Finance and Administration Officer will be appointed to help wardens and staff with the more complex financial controls and procedures that have recently been introduced.

Staffing levels, training and experience within the residential units is to be reviewed, and the Director of Social Services will be recommending staff requirements to the Executive Council based upon the proposals for Drummonds. At Drummonds, the Warden will have three Assistant Managers, each responsible for one area — care services, activities, and finance and administration.

"There is a need to establish clear management reporting lines within units", says the Report which accompanies the re-

commendations. Assistant Manager posts will have a more clearly defined job description. Assistant Managers and those above them will in future have professional qualifications in social work and/or nursing, and considerable management training and skills. (This recommendation is to take effect immediately).

Each warden has been asked to prepare a policy document covering philosophy of care, admissions, management, manpower, community resources, staff training and development, and public relations. These should be ready in November.

The Society plans to review "urgently" its policies on violence in residential units and on the prescription and administration of medicines. It will also review procedures for admission and discharge and the recording of information about residents.

Welcome for anti-discrimination legislation

The Executive Council of The Society welcomes and will support any suitable legislation to combat discrimination against disabled people on the grounds of their disability. This resolution was passed unanimously on 27 September.

Furthermore, it was agreed that terms of reference should be drawn up for the Consumers' Group. An annual grant of £40,000 was approved.

Projects initiated by the Group must be in line with The Society's aims, and staff must be Society employees.

Ron Gerver, Chairman of the Group, is delighted by the official recognition. "I hope that this is the beginning of much greater involvement by disabled people in the decision-making of The Society," he said.

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André relies on a typewriter to do all his written work.

"A brilliant mathematician"

André Cockburn was 12 when he took his "O" level maths last summer. He passed with Grade A.

In fact, he has been working on the "A" level syllabus since last Christmas. "I only entered him for "O" level because it was his first public examination," said Mrs. Rita Bull, his maths teacher for the last two years. "I've never met any child, able-bodied or handicapped, as bright as that."

André is a weekly boarder at the Hephaistos School, a special school run by the Berkshire County Council.

"We hope he will go on to Cambridge to study mathematics," said his father, Peter Cock-

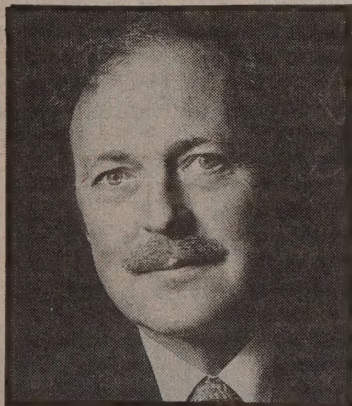
burn, an associate member of The Society.

André has had to overcome not only the physical disability of cerebral palsy but also speech impairment. His brain works so much faster than he can express himself. With difficulty, he types with one finger, using his other hand to support the weak wrist. So disabled did he appear as a small child, that a Berkshire paediatrician dismissed him as being mentally retarded.

André is neither precocious nor just a mathematician. He likes computing — which he treats as a hobby — science, and scouting. He's just back from a trip to France with his school.

CPO takes off

Mark Gerson



Cerebral Palsy Overseas, an international organisation to promote training and spread knowledge of cerebral palsy and other severe disabilities, started work last month.

Although CPO is independent, with its own board of directors, it will rely on The Society for initial funding and professional support.

Derek Lancaster-Gaye, CPO's Director, has wide experience of the field. He has been with The Society for 23 years, four of them as Deputy-Director. Over the last eighteen months he has visited about 40 countries, to conduct a survey of cerebral palsy, assess needs and build up relationships with professional and political leaders.

"What is clearly needed all over the world is improved knowledge", he says. "Nearly everything we do will be based on transmitting knowledge, through staff exchanges, staff training and project work of one sort or another". He is also setting up an information bureau and a magazine.

14 countries are prospective "customers", and several already want to co-operate. Teams from developed countries such as the UK, Scandinavia, Australia, the USA and West Germany will train local professionals and others, taking with them special teaching packs.

Where aids are desperately needed, CPO will arrange for

second-hand aids from Europe to be renovated in a developing country. Not only will this help meet local needs, but it will provide employment for disabled people and ultimately a regular source of supply.

Will CPO be treading on the toes of the International Cerebral Palsy Society?

"On the contrary", says Derek Lancaster-Gaye, "CPO and the ICPS are involved in complementary, but different, activities. We shall be able to co-operate in some areas. Anyway, the amount of work waiting to be done exceeds all our resources. Remember that 300 million disabled people live in countries with little or no facilities".

The offices of Cerebral Palsy Overseas are at 37 Queen Anne Street, London W1M 9FB. Tel: 01-631 1778.

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Letters to the Editor

Spastics News 12 Park Crescent London W1N 4EQ

That's not the attitude

Your report on the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NAS/UWT) statement on the 1981 Education Act (September issue, page 1) makes depressing reading on several counts. No doubt the union made representations during the passage of the Education Bill through Parliament: to attempt to amend it now through press statements is unrealistic and can only cause unease, not to say distress, to all those campaigning to make the integration principle contained in Section 2 of the new Act a reality.

The Spastics Society, which fully supports the integration of children with special educational needs in ordinary schools and colleges, would have hoped for a more compassionate and co-operative response from one of the major teacher unions. If there is to be a greater acceptance of the normality of disability in society generally, then schools, LEAs, professionals and parents have all got to face up to new responsibilities — and new possibilities — bought in under the new law.

The thinly disguised attempt by the union to keep children with special needs out of ordinary schools discriminates against the children and their families. To attempt to exclude these children from ordinary schools, while the placement process is being negotiated, would have the consequence of prejudging the issue, and allow the governors and parents (no doubt influenced by the teachers) to act as judges before all the evidence had been heard and evaluated. Thus elementary justice would be denied to those least able to defend themselves and those most in need of objective appraisal.

Proposal absurd

In addition, any such right of appeal by governors and parents of non-handicapped children, would undermine the LEA's task of assessing and placing a child. Such a proposal is absurd, and an ill-considered suggestion by the union, whose lukewarm support for integration is revealed as a mere figleaf.

Wendy Wheeler



"IF YOUR INTENTIONS ARE SO DAMNED HONOURABLE, WHAT THE HELL'S THE FIG LEAF FOR!"

Although there is a call for more resources from Central Government to help implement the Act — something which The Spastics Society has consistently called for — the union's commentary is, for the most part, a myopic defence of conditions of service for their members. It is true that too many changes in education law raise expectations that cannot be met, but the NAS/UWT, if it really wanted

to be taken seriously as a professional body, should address itself to how the law can be implemented rather than how the much narrower self-interests of its members can be safeguarded.

NAS/UWT out of touch

After all, the questioning of traditional assumptions about "disability" have led to a variety of changes in assessment and placement of children with special educational needs. What would have been considered impossible or even outrageous a few years ago, is now daily practice in many ordinary schools up and down the country. The NAS/UWT hierarchy appear to be out of touch with what is happening in the classroom, for it is individual heads and teachers who so often are the instigators of such schemes.

The Spastics Society set up its Centre for Studies on Integration in Education in July 1982 to promote good practice in integration and help increase public, professional and parental awareness in this rapidly changing field. Government-funded research, as well as The Society's own growing evidence (and that of other bodies) shows that, more than anything else, it is a change in attitudes which is the most important factor in bringing about constructive and stable integrated education for children with special educational needs.

Mark Vaughan,
Co-ordinator,
Centre for Studies on Integration in Education,
The Spastics Society,
12 Park Crescent,
London W1N 4EQ.

Following the right direction

I was very pleased to read the Director's convincing arguments about "Residential care — the consumer must decide" in the July issue. They were discussed by the members of my course at Castle Priory College, who were taking part in a workshop on "Stress in the Residential Situation" at the end of last month.

As part of their work, the course members completed projects. Two of them wrote a report which is very relevant to the Director's suggestions, and I thought your readers would find it interesting and helpful.

Dr. Jack Dunham,
Consultant in Psychology,
School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
University of Bath,
Claverton Down,
Bath BA2 7AY.

(See page 4 for Report)

Warning to disabled parents

Sue Jamieson's article followed by Michael Long's letter (August and September issues) spur me to add my point of view — although I realise I am of a different generation and attitudes may have changed for the better.

I married my dear wife who is completely able-bodied some 38 years ago. We had our first child, Brian, and for five years the relationship between parents and child was normal.



THE DIRECTOR

"An independent newspaper"

It is now three months since *Spastics News* appeared for the first time in its revised form. Comments are trickling in about the reaction of readers and it is hoped that many people will give their views.

Although the new layout and typeface are perhaps the most obvious differences, I should like to draw attention to another more subtle, but potentially more important, development.

Spastics News is now emerging as an independent newspaper in its own right rather than as a house journal for The Society. Over a period of time, this should not only widen the readership, but also have the effect of increasing the respect of outside readers. A newspaper

However, things went horrifically wrong when Brian went to school. I noticed he would not walk with me. Rather, he would walk a hundred yards ahead or behind me, or even across the road. It was many years before I was aware of what was happening for of course in my day we had no hindsight, only guesswork. The crisis came when he was 15 or 16 and I asked him why he did not ask his friends to visit him at home. The reason was because he was highly embarrassed by the fact that I staggered around and fell down occasionally. He did not want his friends to know; he had suffered enough at school. People said to him, "Is your dad always drunk?"

Now I can understand the feelings of my son. He was suffering a mirror image of what I had suffered when I went to a normal school. After a long talk we were able to get things into perspective and his friends began to visit our home.

Alas, my daughter suffered too, although in a different way. I was unaware of it because she hid it from me. She was fighting for her dad against the other school children.

I cannot comment on the problems of children with wheelchair parents. Perhaps because parents are in a wheelchair and not staggering, the attitude of other children may be quite different. I would only wish to warn parents who are disabled in a visible way that their children may hide their suffering and parents may not be aware of the traumas they are going through.

The severely disabled must make up their own minds about whether to have children or not. But if they do, will they be able to counsel them in the right way?

Bill Hargreaves, MBE,
16 Wembley Park Drive,
Wembley,
Middx. HA9 8HA.

which is treating serious subjects in an independent and informed manner is likely in the long run to be more influential, and this is the direction in which we hope *Spastics News* will move.

But of course there is a price to be paid, and part of that price is that from time to time articles will appear in *Spastics News* which cover news stories which may be unwelcome to some sections of the Society and which give vent to the opinions of people with whom some readers disagree. In this respect, *Spastics News* will be like any other newspaper. Editorial policy should normally allow the opportunity of reply to unwelcome articles or viewpoints, but the columns will be a forum for open debate and argument and not for one-sided propaganda.

All this mirrors a new willingness on the part of the Society to become involved in controversial issues. A great deal has already been written in recent months about the possibility of anti-discrimination legislation. A vigorous debate is taking place about the extent to which the process of integration in education can be achieved in the light of existing resource constraints. Both these subjects will be in the forefront of The Society's discussions at many levels during the autumn.

Another topic will be the work done over the past year in researching and framing a new comprehensive disability income and costs allowance. This is another controversial area in which many people who have the same objective at heart — to

improve the level and system of state benefits for disabled people — disagree strongly about how this end can be achieved. The Society intends to sponsor a small conference.

Another conference later in the autumn will focus attention on the controversial subject of neonatal intensive care. The Society has been critical in the past of the inadequate provision made by the DHSS through the Regional and District Health Authorities. At the same time there is a body of opinion which believes that an expansion of intensive care facilities would not only be extremely expensive but also would not necessarily achieve a reduction in the number of handicapped babies.

On a broader scale, there remains the continuing debate about the proper role of voluntary organisations and the extent to which they can make good the gaps in public services caused by expenditure cut-backs.

All these, and other controversies will, we hope, be fully reported in the columns of *Spastics News* and will provoke strong reader reaction — and if this reaction is expressed through letters to the Editor, so much the better. I believe that the interest of handicapped people can only benefit from the development of a responsible newspaper in which issues of importance are aired and freedom of expression is given to holders of differing opinions.

Tim X

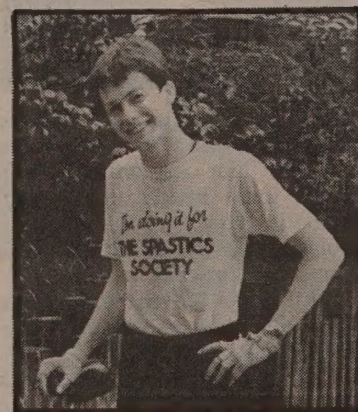
Travel information wanted

I am gathering information for my Master's thesis concerning travel and tourism for the physically disabled.

I would be extremely grateful if my fellow *Spastics News* readers would write and tell me about their travel experiences — both good and bad. I would especially like to hear any suggestions or recommendations you might have to improve travel opportunities.

I would also appreciate hearing from any individuals or firms involved in travel for the disabled. Thank you!

Julie Pecina,
Surrey Court,
University of Surrey,
Guildford,
Surrey GU2 5XH



Thank you from Ben

I would like to thank everyone who gave me so much encouragement and support and so helped me to complete the ride. I came out of it feeling twice as fit as I did when I set out. Although it was very gruelling at times I would gladly do it again just for the elation I felt on reaching John O'Groats.

Ben Smart,
31 Hadley Gardens,
London W.4.

Violence in residential centres

May we congratulate the residential member of staff who gave a candid account of the problems he faces in coping with a violent resident, in Margaret Morgan's column in the September issue.

Unfortunately, we believe that problems like this are only too common but rarely come to light because violence against staff has become the great "unmentionable," surrounded with the aura of a taboo. The reasons are probably twofold in that both parents and care staff may view an incident as being a manifestation of their inability to cope or indeed feel that the violence is their fault. Since both imply failure they are reluctant to reveal the incidence.

It is because we believe that incidents like your correspondent's are far from isolated that Castle Priory College has just run a three-day course on violence against care staff.

For those that missed it this time round the course will be run again next year. Early applications would be welcome.

Simon Ambrose,
Publicity Officer,
Castle Priory College,
Wallingford,
Oxfordshire OX10 0HE.

Parental pressure works

A recent visit to the USA has served to reinforce my view that parental pressure is often the only effective way to make changes in services for the mentally handicapped in areas where change is slow or non-existent.

Although recourse to a Constitution through the courts is

continued on page 3

REPORTS

NE Anti-discrimination legislation conference

Actions speak louder than words

As a veteran of four of these conferences, I was struck by the mature and well presented arguments in support of anti-discrimination legislation at the Newcastle Conference on 10 September. The Conference was forthright in its statements, eager for positive action and determined to take steps to reduce the effects of discrimination against handicapped people in North East England.

About 60 people attended, both able-bodied and disabled, most of them between 18 and 40. There were very few parents. The National Coal Board College was accessible for the many wheelchairs, and staff were welcoming.

All the discussion groups agreed on the need to change public attitudes — through integrated education, more confident social contact, more awareness on the part of handicapped people that their behaviour influences able-bodied attitudes, and by showing that "We have the right to do and live as we wish, and make our own decisions."

Each group produced examples of discrimination.

Mental handicap. Nurses and medical staff deny information, communication and freedom of expression to patients who are, or appear to be, mentally handicapped. They seem unable to accept mentally handicapped

people as people.

Employment. Committees on the Employment of Disabled People (established under the 1944 Act) do not exercise their right to take action against companies who refuse employment on grounds of handicap. The committees need more publicity, more dynamic members, and more "teeth".

Aids. Disabled workers employed directly by a company have enabling aids provided free; workers in MSC programmes do not. More severely handicapped people are less acceptable in training centres. Youngsters may have special aids provided at school but when they leave school it is not general practice to give them aids. "That they are deprived of independence at this vulnerable point in life is very wrong." (Specialist careers officer.)

Transport. What good is campaigning for greater accessibility when transport is unavailable — buses and trains inaccessible, bus drivers impatient, disabled but ambulant users made to feel unwelcome? "Social integration" should not be weekly visits to the pub or shops in a centre minibus, but individuals making up their own minds where and when to go and how much to pay.

Education. "If able bodied children learn and play with handicapped ones, they know they are people too." More speech and physiotherapy should be available in the community even after people leave school.

Media. More disabled people should appear in ordinary programmes on television. "We don't want special programmes devoted to us like David Belfamy does for animals."

Services. They should be accessible to someone alone, so that help is not needed. Telephone boxes are inaccessible and phones too high. There should be positive discrimination to redress the balance.

Finance. Why is there positive discrimination for people who have acquired handicaps (motor accidents, war, etc.) but not for those born handicapped?

The motion, "This House believes that there should be legislation to make unjustifiable discrimination on the grounds of disability illegal", was carried unanimously.

It was decided to form an action group in the NE to lobby for legislation and to consider ways in which public awareness of the needs of handicapped people can be increased. 20 conference members opted to join. It will be convened by Sue Smith and Tony Davis, both "CP handicapped" and expert lobbyists.

Ann Hithersay

SE Anti-discrimination legislation conference

2:1 in favour

A regional conference on the desirability of anti-discrimination legislation was held on 17 September at White Lodge, Chertsey, courtesy of the Principal, Mrs. Carol Myer. More than 50 disabled people came, and also about 20 able-bodied people involved with disability in one way or another.

The conference started with six speakers, among them a blind film-maker, Jimmy Wright, a mother of two mentally handicapped sons, Mrs. Peggy Hirst, and the District Health Officer for NW Surrey, Mrs. Judi Linney, who has recently completed re-

search on IYDP activities in the district. Then the conference divided into smaller groups to discuss the possible impact of anti-discrimination legislation on housing, transport, attitudes, education, access, employment services and mental handicap. Their findings were reported to a plenary session in the afternoon.

Finally, the conference debated the motion, "This Conference believes that there should be legislation to make unjustifiable discrimination on the grounds of disability illegal."

Proposing the motion was Jack Ashley, MP, a champion of rights for disabled people and Chairman of the All Party Disablement Group in Parliament. He said that at present disabled people had no legal redress if they were the victims of discrimination; they could only beg for decent treatment.

He stressed that legislation would be concerned only with *unjustifiable* discrimination. Other countries such as the USA, Canada and Australia had introduced anti-discrimination legislation and it was long overdue in this country. Legislation should not be seen as an alternative to public education but as a foundation for it.

Opposing the motion, Carol Myer said that further legislation was unnecessary and it would be better to spend the money and time on making existing legislation, such as the CSDP Act and Disabled Persons Act, more effective. The situation for disabled people within society had improved immensely over the last thirty years, largely due to the efforts of parents.

Self-reliance, she felt, was the most valuable asset a disabled person could have, and she pointed to the number of people who had succeeded in life despite their disabilities without the need for "aggressive" legislation to protect them.

However, after a lively discussion, the motion was carried by 34 votes to 17, a 2:1 majority.

Hilary Leslie

Immingham: anti-discrimination legislation conference

Local groups, co-operate!

60 people, about 20 of them able-bodied, attended the conference on 24 September. They were welcomed by Councillor Anthony Rouse, Mayor of Grimsby, a supporter of anti-discrimination legislation.

Ken Coulbeck, Conference Chairman and a member of The Society's Executive Council, explained the background to the legislation and then Austin Mitchell, Labour MP for Grimsby, reviewed past private members' bills explaining how difficult it is for a controversial bill to succeed. While the Stewart Bill was generally thought to be poor, Mr. Mitchell believed it had had shabby treatment from Parliament, and he accused the Government of employing "low level bootboy tactics" in talking it out.

He doubted that Bob Wareing's Bill would be successful. It might be necessary to introduce weaker legislation and then strengthen it later. It was up to local groups, he said, to see that their MPs were present for the Second Reading.

Arthur Baxter, who spoke after a showing of the film, "Getting About", criticised local

voluntary groups. He was disappointed by their lack of co-operation, and even conflict with one another. He stressed that this was possibly the last chance for legislation and it needed joint effort.

Ron Gerver said one had to be on one's guard when opponents quoted the few bad examples of legislation and left out the many good ones. It was important to write to one's local MP to support the Bill.

In the afternoon a panel answered questions from the floor. No one spoke against legislation. Dr. Nicholas, Senior Education Officer (Special Needs) for the Humberside Education Authority, supported legislation, and cited the 1981 Education Act as an example of legislation implementing a report.

In summing up, Gordon Davies put two propositions: Do you feel the handicapped are discriminated against? And, legislation would be welcome. Both were carried unanimously.

David Brown

SE Regional Conference

The best at fund-raising

The South East Regional Committee held its 13th AGM and conference at Thomas Delarue School, Tonbridge, on 25 September. About 80 people came from all over the region.

In his opening speech, Richard Tomlinson expressed support for The Society's policy on consumer protection. But he believed that parents of any child, handicapped or not, must be allowed a say in what type of education that child receives. Mainstream schooling is not always the most suitable for the handicapped child.

Tim Yeo reviewed The Society's main campaigns over the year and encouraged everybody to read the Annual Report.

Derek Ashcroft, Acting Chairman, paid warm tribute to Ernest Williment, who had resigned during the year after a sudden illness. He had been Chairman of the SE Regional Committee for 13 years and before that Chairman of the Wessex Region. Mr. Ashcroft presented Mr. Williment with a

leather writing case and a plaque commemorating his service, which will be placed in the new Boyatt Wood housing scheme. The scheme is being jointly funded by the Winchester Group and Hampshire Social Services. £5,000 has been promised from the SE Regional Fund.

Reviewing the past year, Mr. Ashcroft said that in spite of many staff changes, the Region's fund raising activities were still the best of the eight regions.

The meeting elected Derek Ashcroft Chairman, and Dorothy Till (Worthing Group) Vice Chairman.

The Rev. Edgar Wallace who under the auspices of TOC-H already runs eight small residential hostels in the Crawley area for 60 young adults, described with a mixture of humour, compassion and forcefulness his two major projects. As Industrial Chaplain in Crawley, he realised that the new town had not got to grips with the problems of the physically and mentally handicapped. He found a site, and after negotiation with eight different authorities, ranging from the parish council to the Department of Environment, he acquired the land at a rent of £100 a year for 250 years!

While plans are prepared for that scheme, he has acquired a redundant hostel and with a grant for £750,000 from the MSC he is developing a part respite-part workshop centre. Activities will include farming, growing and selling herbs, education, horse riding, animal husbandry and pottery. Over the next two years he plans to raise £3m from both statutory bodies and the public.

Hugh Grainger, the new Director of Social Services in Tonbridge, was less optimistic: Kent Social Services is being asked to cut a further £2m from an already inadequate budget. He emphasised that close co-operation between Social Services and voluntary bodies is necessary if facilities for physically handicapped adults are to be improved. Active lobbying by group members and the handicapped themselves could do much to ensure that they are not pushed to the bottom of the social services heap. Jean Potterton welcomed Mr. Grainger's approach.

Chris Rutherford

Letters to the Editor

Continued from page 2

not available in this country, there is no doubt that there is much that parents can do if they bring pressure to bear in the right places. Parents of handicapped children who are concerned that there is little or no alternative provision for care in their area to a hospital placement should know that the Government is committed to getting all handicapped children out of hospital (other than for acute treatment) and has provided funding for schemes.

Parents would be advised to enquire about imaginative schemes in various districts that are achieving this objective and, if it is not happening in their district, to ask why.

Sue Ripley,
EXODUS,
12 Park Crescent,
London W1N 4EQ
(EXODUS is a campaign to bring children out of long stay hospitals. Supported by Campaign for the Mentally Handicapped, Kith and Kids, MIND, National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children, The Spastics Society and One to One.)

Disabled motor sport enthusiast?

Are there any disabled motor sport enthusiasts who would like to help me investigate the possibilities of a club or association? There are clubs for almost every other sport and recreation for the disabled, but nothing that caters for the disabled motor sport enthusiast.

Ronald Cottrell,
87 Cedar Road,
Stroud,
Rochester, Kent ME2 2JN.



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Wendy Wheeler

Private Medicine: who foots the bill?

by Linda Avery and Pip Evans

For almost forty years the British population has enjoyed a comprehensive medical service, free at the time of need. The National Health Service (NHS) has remained virtually unaltered in principle and practice. What opposition there has been has come largely from doctors within the service fighting to retain the right to private practice.

Now, faced with economic recession and a further five years of Conservative Government — whose central ideology is one of free enterprise — we are witnessing a steady erosion of the NHS and increasing support for privatisation.

The Think Tank report which emerged in September 1982, suggested that 20-30% of the NHS could be de-nationalised, with the more affluent members of society paying for their health needs out of their own income and private health insurance.

While Mrs. Thatcher was proclaiming, "The NHS is safe



with us", her ex-Minister of Health, Gerard Vaughan, was expressing his hope that the private sector would be carrying out a quarter of hospital work by 1985. These statements are not incompatible, but the expansion of the private sector is already aggravating the problems which face the NHS.

It is extremely difficult to identify and assess the ways in which the NHS is affected by private medicine. There is a conspicuous lack of data regarding private use of NHS facilities and many of the effects are sociological and psychological which make them impossible to verify impartially. In any case, the provision of health care cannot be decided purely on objective grounds; value judgements have to be made. In 1946 we decided that it was too vital a commodity to leave to the open market, so we erected a system to which access was based on need rather than being

able to pay.

One of the major criticisms of the private sector is that it fails to pay its own way: the majority of staff it employs were trained at NHS, or public, expense. Some efforts have been made by the private sector to undertake the training of medical staff, but it is clear that if the full cost of that training was to be taken into account, neither private patients, nor their insurers, would be able to bear the cost. Similarly, the use of NHS facilities such as radiology and pathology may be nominally paid for by private patients, but if the real cost of providing all the vital auxiliary services was met in full, even the richest patients might balk at the bill.

Today, with the cost of traditional medical care soaring, it is even more important to maintain a national service and, where necessary, change its direction according to the needs of the population. In im-

peding that change, private practice adversely affects the NHS. It has been recognised for several years that more resources must be directed towards the prevention of ill-health and the provision of care for mentally ill, mentally and physically handicapped, and elderly people. But these areas are unlikely to attract talented young doctors who understandably gravitate towards those specialist areas which offer the highest pay.

On a national level, then, private practice affects the NHS by failing to reimburse the service for the cost of staff training and the full cost of auxiliary services, by attracting trained staff away when there is a known shortage of manpower, and by depleting resources available for the "Cinderella" services — those dealing with elderly, mentally ill and chronically sick people.

Nevertheless, in 1980, Patrick Jenkin argued that a thriving private sector could reduce pressure on the NHS and the public purse. If one considers the situation facing BUPA, WPA and PPP, one wonders how this can be so.

In 1980 they grew by 27%, and to help sustain and promote this growth a measure was introduced in 1981 relieving all employees earning less than £8,500 a year from paying income tax on the value of the private health premiums paid for them by their employers. However, since 1980, the growth rate has fallen dramatically. If the private market is to reach the level desired by Minis-

ters, further tax concessions will be necessary. This would be, in effect, a direct fiscal subsidy for private medicine, representing revenue that could have been spent on the "Cinderella" services.

Given tax subsidies, people who use the private sector do not reduce NHS waiting lists; they simply benefit at the expense of those who are less fortunate.

On economic grounds the arguments for private medicine fail. The NHS is relatively cheap to run. Britain spends less on health care than almost any other Western European country. Administrative costs are also much lower. In the mid-seventies, administrative costs accounted for 2.6% of health expenditure compared with 10.8% in France and 10.6% in Belgium. Further, if the health care market were to be privatised, as it is in North America, private insurance companies would face costs explosions as doctors and private hospitals exercise their market power.

An enlarged private sector is likely to create a two-tiered system in which the healthy and wealthy will have their needs met, and the poor, the old and the ill will have to rely on an underfunded, understaffed and demoralised NHS.

As Aneurin Bevan said, "The essence of a satisfactory health service is that rich and poor are treated alike, that poverty is not a disability and wealth is not an advantage."

Can we afford to forget his words?

EFT/POS will help disabled people

The difficulties faced by disabled people who cannot produce a standard signature when they want to withdraw money from the bank or use a credit card, were revealed in "Identity Crisis" (Spastics News, June).

A recent statement issued by the Banking Information Service on behalf of twelve major banks is likely to change all that. The banks' Policy Committee has confirmed its support for the development of a national payment system based on a network of retailer terminals known as "electronic funds transfer at the point of sale" (EFT/POS). It is hoped to start trials in 1986 and to have the network completed by 1990.

Customers will be able to pay at, say, a store, garage or restaurant by handing over a plastic card to a cashier who will insert it in the terminal. Information on the back of the card will be read off, and the customer then taps in a personal identification number. If everything is in order, authorisation from the card issuer's computer will be received within seconds. The retailer's bank account will be credited automatically, and the customer's account with the card issuer will be debited. There will be no need of a signature.

The simple procedure should help everyone.

Ann Potter

CASTLE PRIORY

Residential Care—where the consumer does not decide

This report, of a residential centre run by a voluntary organisation, was written as part of a course on "Stress in the Residential Situation", held at Castle Priory College in August.

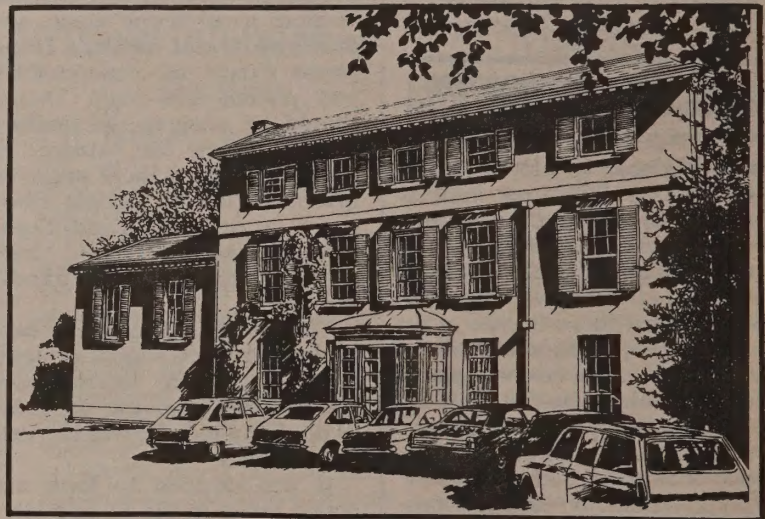
The aim of the project was to build up better communication between management and residents.

We asked six residents their opinions of how things have changed over the years, whether for better or for worse, and how they would like to see the home altered in the future. We also talked with nine house parents.

Virtually all the residents we spoke with gave the same points of view.

Most of our extrovert residents have below average intelligence. These are the ones that the Warden usually communicates with, so he therefore thinks all their problems are trivial. If he would listen to the quieter and more intelligent residents, he would perhaps understand their frustrations.

We discovered through talking with some of these quieter ones that they wished for more social activities such as films, discotheques, theatre and football matches. They would also like to use the existing facilities more often, e.g. their social club is only used for a discotheque on one night each week.



They would like to see more assessments of their capabilities, which could be used to make education and physiotherapy units more interesting and beneficial to themselves.

The work shop used to be like a thriving industry. Now all they seem to do is assemble intricate electrical plugs which is difficult and boring for most of them to do.

Occupational therapy is limited, and residents have commented that if the management knew of their interests in photography, wine-making, dress-making, and so on, perhaps they would allow them to have lectures.

They feel that if management had more knowledge of the aids available for education, feeding, bathing and toileting and were willing to try them out, some of the frustration of having to depend on other people all the time could be relieved.

The residents would like to have discussions with the staff about the difficulties both sides face. Many feel insecure with certain members of staff about toileting, bathing etc. so they turn to staff they can trust. This puts more strain on staff and causes more friction between

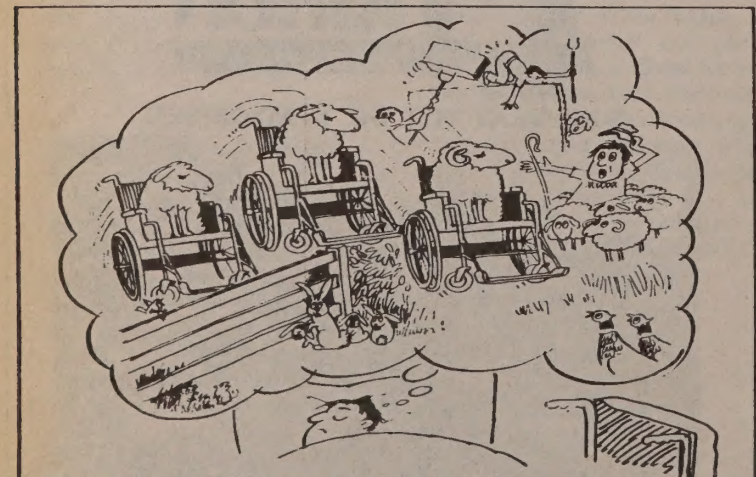
staff members. If staff communicated more, it would be easier to reduce this stress, but how do you tell some-one who is older and has worked there longer than you, that she is failing to fulfil her caring role?

The residents should be given more opportunities to express their opinions, however trivial. It would relieve the frustrations of life in a residential home.

When we talked it over with the Warden, it was agreed that progress would be made. Two meetings have been held with residents at which the Warden asked their views. We hope this will lead to better communication.

Home win for Birmingham City

A stand for disabled people, the first in the Midlands, has just been opened at Birmingham City football ground. Sponsored by Remploy, the covered enclosure will take 36 wheelchairs and several trikes, and allows standing room for helpers. There is a ramp from grass level into the enclosure. Entrance is free!



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I wish I had a Newton Ultra Lightweight...
I wish I had a Newton...zzzzzz"

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When only the best will do — go Newton

INTERNATIONAL

Time and money were not in endless supply for my international visits, but Africa was essential if I was to undertake a global review of cerebral palsy. Zimbabwe seemed an obvious choice: a member of the Commonwealth, and a state claiming to have health services comparable to the best to be found in Europe.

As usual my timing was impeccable. I arrived in Zimbabwe's capital Harare, a modern and outwardly thriving city of commercial and social edifices, at the same moment as that chosen by winter. Even Southern Africa has four seasons. This one was cold and wet; my suitcase had planned for hot and dry. I was to spend two weeks in this fascinating country, hosted by the National Council of Disabled Persons of Zimbabwe.

To understand something of the problems of Zimbabwe it is necessary to remember that this was once Rhodesia, a British colony until the days of unilateral independence under Ian Smith's Rhodesia National Front. Now it is an independent member of the Commonwealth, with an essentially black administration and a dwindling white population of less than 1/4 million in a total population of some 7 1/2 millions.

Its laws, its government style, its local authorities and many of its philosophies, not surprisingly, are British in character. Its peoples are basically Matabele or Shona, ZAPO or ZANO in political terms, representative of the personalities of Mr.



Derek Lancaster-Gaye

Four years ago The Spastics Society donated one of its Newton electric chairs to the Jairos Jiri Association in Zimbabwe. Now two owners later, the chair is still in business, its only concession to age being the badly worn tyres.

Zimbabwe

700,000 disabled people— and one electric wheelchair

by Derek Lancaster-Gaye

Joshua Nkomo and Prime Minister Robert Mugabe.

Tribal rivalries die hard. This is a divided nation, united at least in its need to cope with such fundamental issues as malnutrition, disease, bad housing, unemployment and poverty — issues which must be seen as a legacy of British rule.

The pattern of mistakes seems all too familiar. 98 per cent of the population is black and 80 per cent live in the rural areas, yet services for the disabled and primary health care are geared predominantly to a white population located in urban centres. With few exceptions the centres for the disabled, all run by voluntary organisations, were set up originally for the white population. Those that do exist, mainly in Harare and Bulawayo,

provide a first class service with experienced professionals, reaching perhaps as few as 4 per cent of those needing them.

An obviously inadequate rural health service, improved by Mr. Mugabe's Government when it came to power, and depleted again by the tribal war, is faced with some staggering statistics — so far as local statistics can be believed. The infant mortality rate for blacks is in the region of 122 per 1,000. Put more simply, roughly one infant in every ten dies before its first birthday. One professional suggested to me that in her view as many as half the children died before they reached their fifth birthday. Yet for the whites, the rate is a mere 17 per 1,000, a figure that compares well with Europe.

All departments of government are faced with one common factor, an acute lack of finance which has slowed down developments that might have improved the quality of life for Zimbabwe's disabled population of around 700,000 people. (Official statistics put the figure at less than 300,000).

Priorities have had to be allocated and in the field of disability priority has been given to the country's disabled ex-servicemen, a tempting but not necessarily wise course to adopt unless primary health care is given at least equal status.

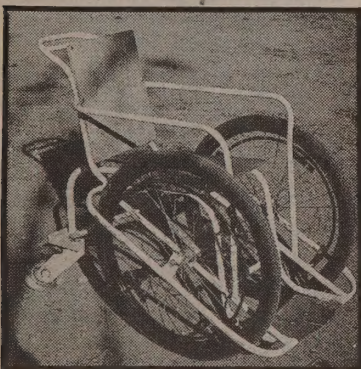
Harare boasts one of the finest rehabilitation centres I have yet seen, built at a cost of some £5m and planned to cater for 200 resident disabled people, all ex-servicemen. What is needed here is an army of trained staff, but Zimbabwe with its limited staff training facilities will obviously have considerable problems of recruitment. Nor, it seems, is it easy to attract qualified and experienced staff from overseas, or indeed to keep those who have been trained. 84 medical

students will qualify this year and 80 of these are expected to leave Zimbabwe.

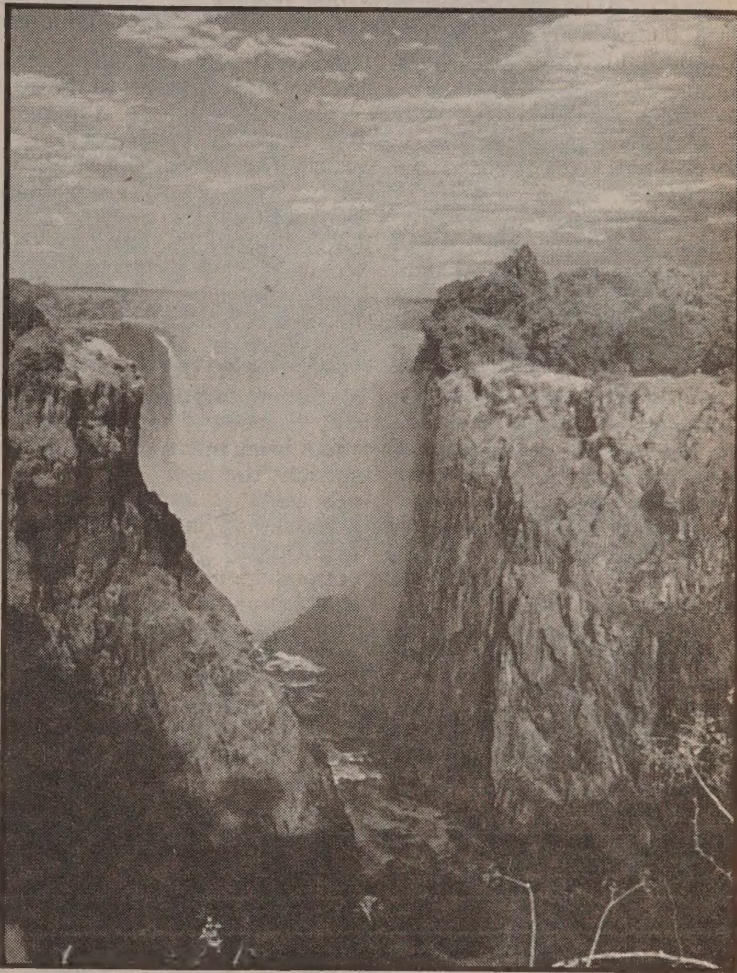
As usual, it is the severely disabled who receive minimal services: scarcely any aids unless these are purchased privately; lack of education in schools; lack of trained staff to cope with the more severe handicaps such as cerebral palsy (except for the lucky few attending the urban based centres); severe unemployment; and a total absence of accessible transportation. They all combine to isolate the disabled.

But what Zimbabwe lacks in services for the disabled it makes up for in its general awareness. Services are to be improved, and meaningful rural development plans which take into account some of the needs of the disabled population are now under way.

Mr. Mugabe's present Government has much to say about the improvements that are to come. Only time will show whether politics and finance will produce the policies that in turn provide a little of the dignity that we take for granted.



AHRTAG (The Appropriate Health Resources and Technologies Action Group), based in the UK, developed its own wheelchair design for use in Zimbabwe: simple, cheap, rugged and using local materials and skills.



The Victoria Falls on the Zimbabwe/Zambia border.

VIEWPOINT

Countless hours of professional training have been spent teaching me to do things which come relatively easily to most children. But the foundations were laid by my parents.

Parents can smooth the way to maximum independence or they can stand in the way of independence year after year.

I was blessed with parents who are not only intelligent but also well-endowed with common-sense and determination. This enabled them to back their own judgement when they were given discouraging medical opinions.

For instance, when I was about three, they were told that I was ineducable, although no attempt had been made to measure my intelligence. At the time my speech was extremely limited. Only my family could understand anything.

Nevertheless, my mother devised her own tests to prove to herself that I was understanding more than I could say. She used



Jeff Smorley

Valerie Lang says

Don't wrap your handicapped child in cotton wool

to tell me nursery rhymes, and she found that if she made a mistake in one of them I would protest until she said it correctly. Also she talked to me a great

deal, thus ensuring mental stimulation. She was a firm believer in freedom of movement, so I was put on the floor and encouraged to roll when I was late in crawling. Toys were put slightly out of reach so that I would have the impetus to move towards them. I learned to crawl, and finally walk when I was six.

Two ideas profoundly influenced the way my parents coped with my handicap. One was their own insight that success was extremely important. My mother put the toys very slightly out of reach; any movement would represent success. Throughout childhood, my attention was focussed upon achievable objectives rather than upon what was clearly impossible.

This second idea came from a specialist who was prepared to encourage. He told my parents that if I was to learn to walk, I would fall and hurt myself and they would just have to accept it. To their eternal credit they have acted upon this ever since. I was allowed to go out on my tricycle before I could walk at

all well. I was permitted to go horse-riding long before riding for the disabled was encouraged. Much later they suppressed any qualms they may have had when I decided to move into a flat of my own. Even now they are exercising considerable self-restraint. I have spent this year belatedly learning to drive, in the middle of London.

While all parents influence their children, the parents of disabled children have a crucial role to play. It is a very difficult role. It is much easier to wrap a handicapped child up in cotton wool and keep it safe than to encourage it to take risks. But life for the disabled child is difficult. It is also likely to be painful. If parents can accept that, and encourage their physically or mentally handicapped child to have a go — right from the start — they will help their child to reach his or her potential.

Now that more disabled children will be going to ordinary schools, the role of parents will be even more demanding. Support and encouragement will be needed by children who are

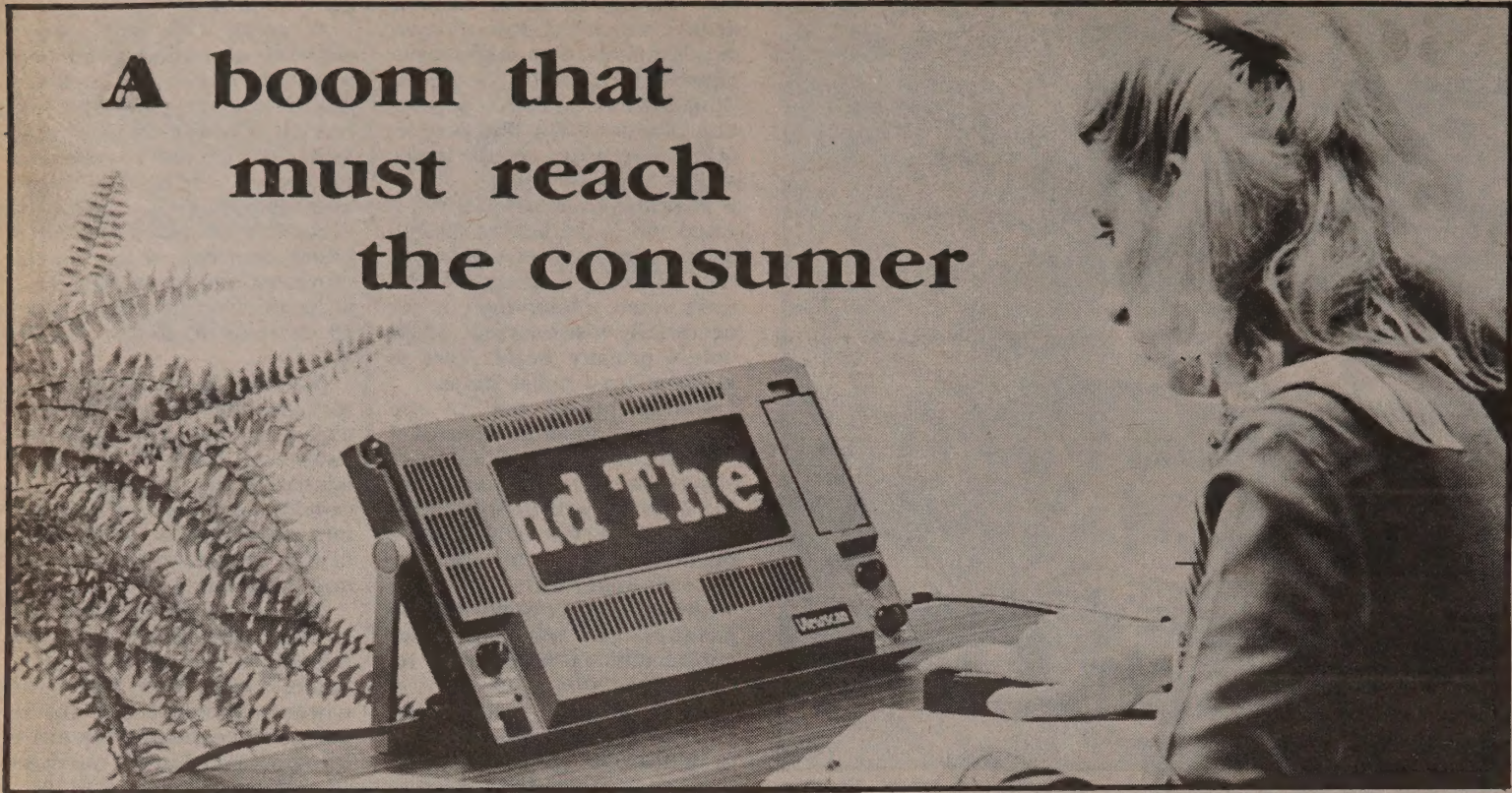
trying to keep up with their able-bodied peers. "Keeping up" means much more than completing an adequate amount of school work and perhaps managing your own self-care. It means maintaining your dignity and self-respect when you do everything more slowly than everyone else. It means learning how to accept the right amount of help without appearing to be lazy or demanding. It means having a "presence" — so that you will be respected for yourself, even though you look a little odd — not being the butt of school jokes. Parents will need to find interests and activities inside the school and out where their child can enjoy success.

Success is necessary for a well-rounded character. Parents — and professionals too — must be able to recognise it, build on it, and even create the right conditions for their handicapped child to taste its delights.

This is an edited version of a paper given at the International Cerebral Palsy Society Seminar in Belgium last year.

microtechnology and handicap . . . microtechnology and handicap . . . microtechnology and handicap

A boom that must reach the consumer



Viewsan is the first portable electronic reading aid for partially sighted people. You scan the page with a small hand-held camera and a magnified image comes up on the screen. £1,980. Wormald International Sensory Aids, 7 Musters Rd, West Bridgford, Nottingham.

"I didn't understand a word of the last two days", lamented a delegate at a recent conference on microtechnology. So fast is this field developing, and so esoteric is the language, that the anguish of the delegate must be shared by many people.

Applied to aids for the handicapped, microtechnology can offer more sophisticated equipment which is easier to use and can improve the communication of people with speech impairment. Recognising its potential, The Society organised the first Distech conference and exhibition in 1981. Now comes the boom. In the last two months the Maths 83 conference has been held (15-16 September) and two exhibitions sponsored by the Department of Trade and Industry have begun to tour the country.

Maths 83 was organised by the Northamptonshire Social Services Department and the Northamptonshire Council for the Disabled for people in

education, health and social services, and organisations involved with handicap. Although the range of papers did not reflect the range of delegates, there were some interesting contributions. Professor William Gosling, Technical Director of Plessey Electronics, explained how his company had become involved in the development of aids, and Brian Fawcus, of the Centre for Clinical Communication Studies, at City University, London, talked about using micro-processors in speech therapy. The micro-processor is now making it possible not only to help communication but to develop low cost equipment for assessment and treatment. In two years, the price of speech synthesisers has dropped from £2,000 to £200.

Concerned Technology is a touring exhibition which by July 1984 will have visited 29 cities in the British Isles. On display are 30 to 40 aids and appliances which can cope with

many tasks, from switching on lights to leading a full life with the help of a computer.

The other travelling exhibition, Microfair, was launched in September. It goes to Coventry and London in October, and to Cardiff and Edinburgh in November. The exhibition ranges from mobility aids such as electric wheelchairs, through communication equipment, including Possum, to more recent developments such as expanded keyboards linked to micro-computers, and training devices like the Braille writer.

The centre of attraction will be CEAD (Communication and Environment Aid for the Disabled), a control unit which is interposed between the computer and the user (e.g. suck-blow switch or head switch) and eliminates the need for modifying the computer. It has been developed by Dave Allan of the Handicapped Persons Research Unit at Newcastle-upon-Tyne Polytechnic.

While the advantages of microtechnology for the handicapped are fully recognised, the best way of passing them on is still through DHSS prescriptions. Yet products do not always get prescribed. For example, 50 Scanning Microwriters have been ready and waiting at centres all over the country since early summer, and consultants have not prescribed them.

The way to lower prices in a wider market may lie in adapting commercially available products. Specially designed aids are not only expensive but, it has been argued, promote segregation.

Spastics News will run occasional articles to keep readers informed, intelligibly, of the issues as well as new equipment, conferences and publications. If you use modern communication or mobility aids, the Editor would like to hear of your experiences.

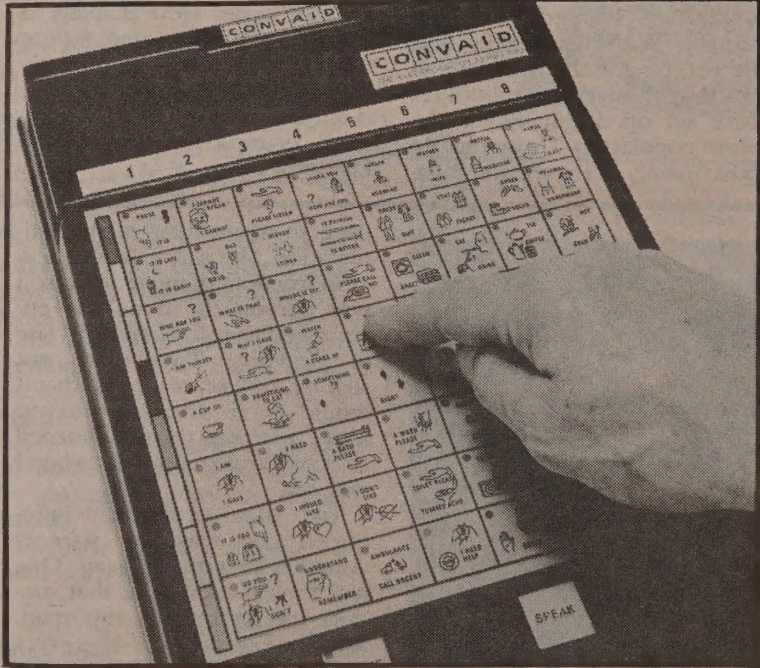


Above: the Canon Communicator is a simple, portable, mini-electronic typewriter (280 grams) designed for people with speech or writing disturbances or for those with multiple handicaps. £282 plus VAT from Canon Business Machines (UK) Ltd., Waddon House, Stafford Road, Croydon CR9 4DD.



Above right: the new Convaidd electronic speaking aid has a "keyboard" of 64 squares. By pressing the keys a sentence can be produced which is stored in the unit's memory and released as a full sentence when the Speak key is pressed. Transparent overlays enable you to use different vocabularies. £495 (including one word bank chosen from the standard range). Convaidd Ltd., 1 The Avenue, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 3YA.

Left: Turtle is a microcomputer controlled device that draws geometric shapes. £165. Jessop Microelectronics, Unit 5, 7 Long Street, London E2 8HW.



Above: your child's first computer? My Talking Computer is a speaking computer for children and mothers. It has 21 programmes aimed to teach time, maths, and reading skills. About £60. Electroplay Ltd., 93 High Street, Esher, Surrey KT10 90A.

The

"I'm terrible on top of a ladder once. Why not?"

"The worst part was getting decision to jump. In training the plane there's no turning back."

"My mouth went dry. My hair what am I doing here?"

"Then when I jumped, every experience".

That is how Paul Meijer remembers his first parachute jump at Ashford Airport, Lymington, Kent.

Most of the time, however, as Appeals Officer in the South East Region, he has been persuading other people to jump for The Society.

Between mid-July and the end of October, about 375 will have accepted the challenge in Kent and East Sussex. With another 400 recruited by Will Eades, that makes nearly 800 people.

At £100 sponsorship a head, less expenses, Paul and Will hope to have raised £40,000 by the end of the season.

Paul was surprised at the response. "I had hoped to get 100 people over one weekend, but after the publicity, the phone went mad". He had to take on extra staff. He thinks it was the novelty and danger which attracted people.

In fact, the danger was reduced to a minimum with proper training and supervision. Training took a minimum of 6 hours; jumps were from 2,000 ft, and everyone was equipped with helmets, heavy boots and modern parachutes designed for students. The worst that happened was one broken leg.

Now people have done it once or twice, the novelty is wearing off. Response is down for next year.

"Maybe it will be hang-gliding next, or parasailing", says Paul.

For parasailing you are tied on the end of a long cable to the back of a car or boat, and after five or ten steps the parachute fills with air and you take off — to 50 ft or more.

"The ultimate experience" for 1984?



2,000 ft up and falling fast. It was static line opens the parachute.

Flying squads

en I thought, you only die
e plane. You've made the
that once you get into the
sweating. I kept thinking,
s calm. It was an incredible

Sponsored parachute jump

Tracey Ward



turn next! Miranda Lots, fully
ipped with a helmet, a main
chute and a reserve, is ready to
Groups of ten went off at a
e in the Cessna aircraft.

Paul Meijer



about 3 seconds before the
natically.

Kite flying is not a sport one would associate with disabled people. The Drummond Kite Group proves not only that they can fly kites, but design and make them, and do it very well.

The ten members of the club, men and women from Drummonds Centre in Essex, have won the first annual prize for enterprise in kite design and development sponsored by Shell UK.

On 2 October they travelled to Old Warden Airfield, near Biggleswade, where Alasdair Carnegie, a director of Opportunities for the Disabled, presented a Stratoscoop 3.5 kite, worth £200, to Derek Ashcroft, Vice-Chairman of The Society. It was a particularly happy moment for Derek Ashcroft, because his son, Mark, is a member of the club.

The success of Drummonds Kite Group is largely due to the energy and enthusiasm of Nick Carter, its founder and Secretary. For two years he has run weekly classes in the design and making of kites until now, as he puts it, "We have crept up to the top." The biggest kite they ever made was 20 ft across.

At weekends the Group travels all over the country to meetings organised by other clubs in the British Kite Flying Association. In 1981 they demonstrated kite flying at the Highland Games. The Group has won several awards.

In between meetings, it gives free demonstrations at schools.

Opportunities for the Disabled is a registered charity supported by about 170 industrial and commercial companies. It aims to place disabled people in meaningful employment which is related to their ability, not their disability. It is also involved with education, research into rehabilitation and development of aids.

Alasdair Carnegie is a kite enthusiast too, both designing and flying them. "It is a sport where disabled people can integrate with able-bodied" he says. "Nick Carter has done a splendid job."

Opportunities for the Disabled, 1 Bank Buildings, Princes Street, London EC2R 8EU.



"Opportunities for the Disabled" in flight.

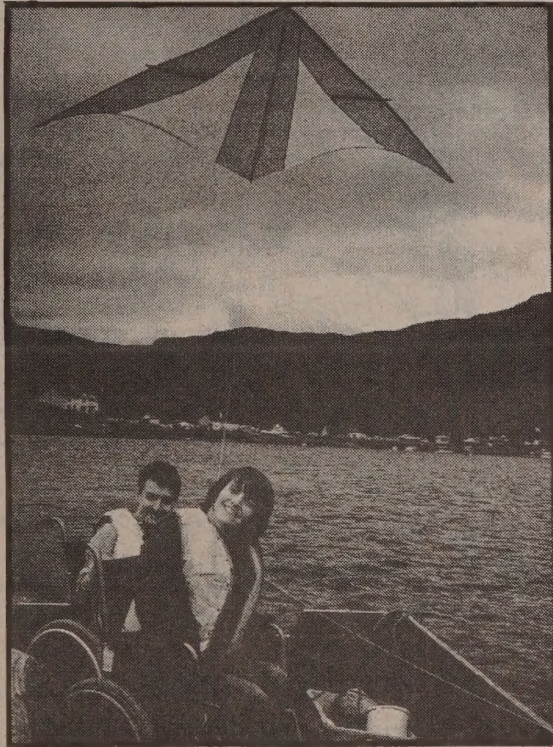
Drummonds Kite Group

Opportunities for the Disabled



Alisdair Carnegie (back row left) presented the kite to Derek Ashcroft, who holds it up with Robert Vains and Nick Carter. Front row (left to right) Michael Hopkins, Daryl Brimcomb, Victor Boyd, Brendan Carroll, Janice McGee, Mandy Short, Karen Halliday and Mark Ashcroft.

Nick Carter



Last year the kite group brought Oban to a standstill as cars stopped to watch them towing a boat across the loch by kite power. "Trouble was, the boat was leaking", Nick Carter explained. "I spent all my time bailing out!"

Tracey Ward



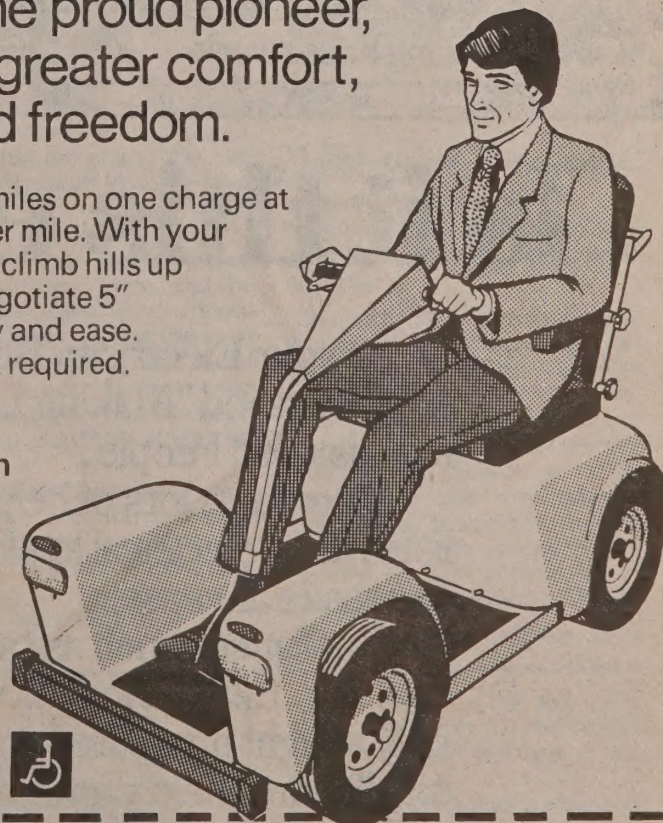
Done it, Mum! Tracey Ward catches her fiancé, Dave Baker, with a smug grin and an armful of parachute.

Out and about with Batricar

Batricar, the proud pioneer, gives you greater comfort, styling and freedom.

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Ask for a free demonstration or folder without obligation.



I would like a Batricar folder/free demonstration.

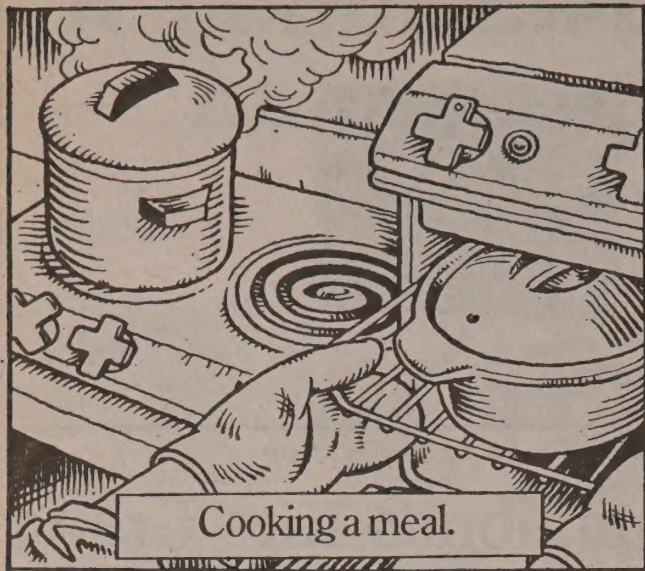
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Telex: 43486.

Or, Mayfield Ind. Estate,
Dalkeith, Midlothian.
Telephone: 031-6630208.

SN 10/83



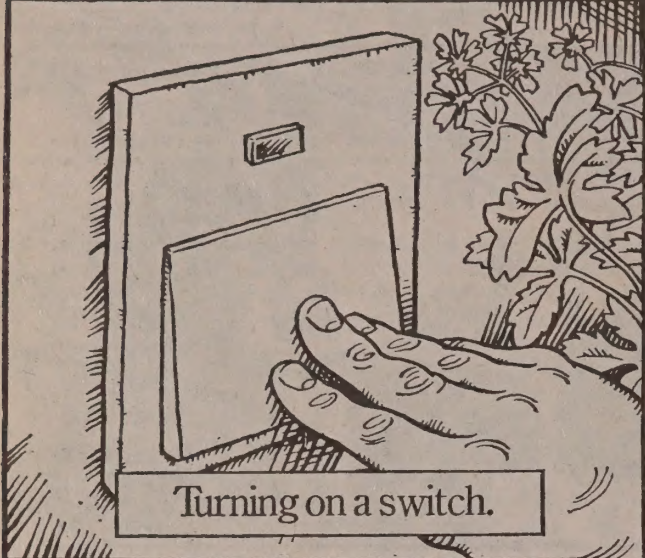
Cooking a meal.



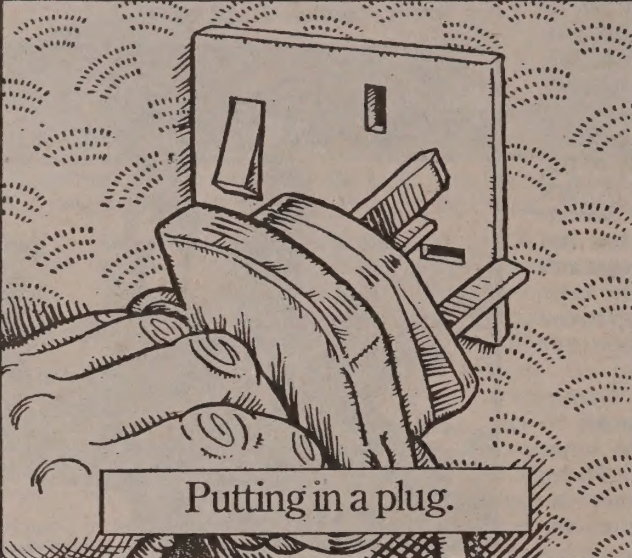
Slicing bread.



Mixing food.



Turning on a switch.



Putting in a plug.



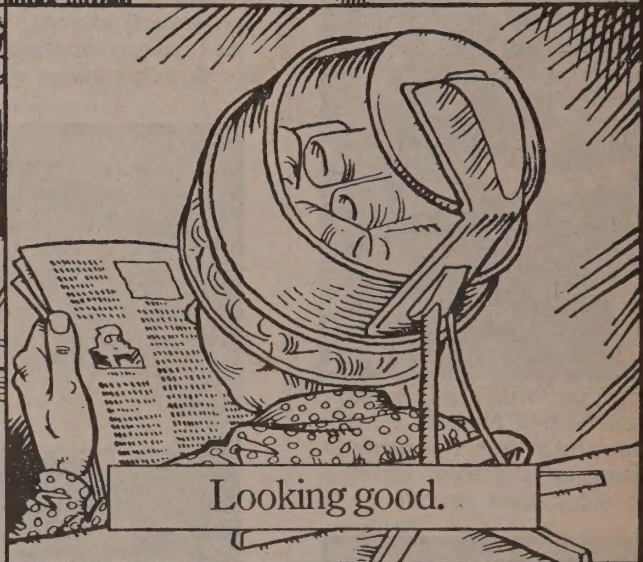
Ironing.



Doing housework.



Cooking chips.



Looking good.

Is it this easy in your home?

At your Electricity Board, we have a leaflet called "Making Life Easier for Disabled People".

It contains lots of helpful ideas and lists many electrical appliances which can make life easier.

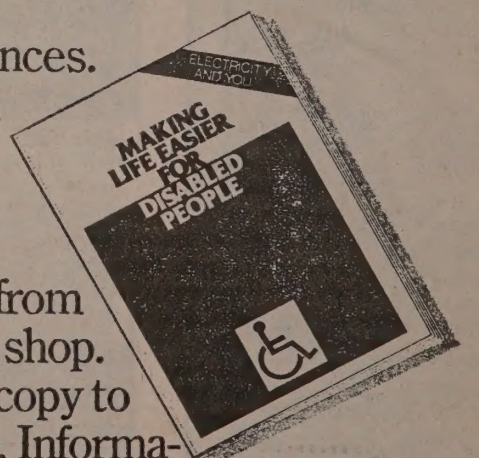
Appliances such as table-top mini cookers. Electric knives which require only a slight pressure to operate. And small, hand-held vacuum cleaners which can be used for dusting, too.

The leaflet also gives details of brailled controls that can be fitted to

certain electrical appliances. And specially designed attachments for plugs and switches which afford easier handling.

The leaflet is free, from your Electricity Board shop. Or you can write for a copy to the Electricity Council, Information Centre, 30 Millbank, London SW1P 4RD.

THINK ELECTRIC
The Electricity Council, England and Wales.



OUTLOOK

International Arts magazine



Opportunities for disabled writers and artists to publish or show their work in Britain are few, and there is no national arts magazine devoted to disabled people. In America, "the land of opportunity", the publishing gap has been filled by *Kaleidoscope*, a national literary and art magazine produced twice a year by United Cerebral Palsy and Services for the Handicapped, Akron, Ohio.

Kaleidoscope went national 1981-1982 when it was a special project of the National Committee, Arts for the Handicapped, an educational affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts. It aims not only to give disabled writers and artists an outlet, but also to show that their work is of a professional standard and cannot be dismissed as being simply therapeutic. Each issue features work by established artists as well as previously unpublished material by newcomers. The editorial board (almost all of whom are disabled) feel strongly that the work of disabled artists and writers should be presented attractively to a wider public and want the magazine to become better known in Europe. In the last issue (No. 7, see above) *Kaleidoscope* went international featuring the British poet, Vivienne Finch, and the International Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists.

Kaleidoscope runs international poetry, fiction and art competitions every year which are judged professionally. There are substantial cash awards and all submissions are considered for publication. Deadline for this year's competitions is 3 November 1983.

Anyone interested in submitting work to the magazine, entering the competitions, or taking out a subscription should contact Gill Parker, European Editor, *Kaleidoscope*, c/o The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ. Tel: 01-636 5020.

... or as Gertrude Stein says

The sky is as blue as itself,
and the tree is as green as its leaves.
How shall I write a poem about today?

The tree stands
but the tree has no feet.
The tree leans its head
but the tree is not tired,
growing without resting
resting without pausing.

Let me try again.

The wind blows.
How, having no whistle?
The wind sings.
How, having no tune?
The wind sighs.
How, having no heart?
Yet it is lovers who borrow
from the wind their softness and storms.

Well, then, the wind moves.
How, having no body
but the motion of bodies?

When the sky is as blue as itself,
and the tree is as green as its leaves -
a poem is only
taking a child's downy skull
gently between your hands
and, with not so much breath as might startle
a gnat's wing, whispering,
"Look!"

from *Selected and New Poems 1980 (1983)*

Pigself

Pigself seeks to be delicate
swaying to spirit's music,
but trips up its own feet.

Pigself, a poor drunkard and glutton
for visions, roots among them
and backs off with a blush.

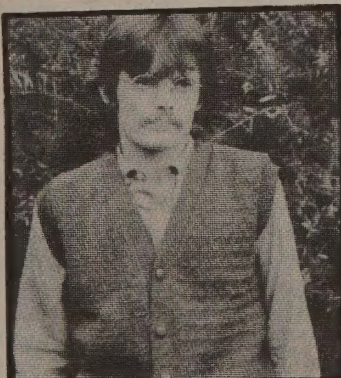
Still, pigself needs to remember
how its lush poverty
provides its alphabet

or grunts, groans, snuffles, and snorts
so that spirit can spell
even the word for God.

The wisdom of insecurity

There's no abiding city, no, not one.
The towers of stone and steel are fairy stories.
God will not play our games nor join our fun,
Does not give tit for tat, parade His glories.
And chance is chance, not providence dressed neat,
Credentials hidden in its wooden leg.
When the earth opens underneath our feet,
It is a waste of brain and breath to beg.
No angel intervenes but shouts that matter
Has been forever mostly full of holes.
So Simon Peter always walked on water,
Not merely when the lake waves licked his soles.
And when at last he saw he would not drown,
That shining knowledge turned him upside-down.
from *Selected and New Poems 1950-1980 (1981)*

Vassar Miller, 59, whose poems were featured in *International Kaleidoscope 1983*, has cerebral palsy. She has written eight volumes of poetry. *Wage War on Silence (1960)* was nominated for a Pulitzer prize. Vassar Miller lives in Houston, Texas, and is at present editing a volume of writings by disabled people, including Christy Brown, part of which will be reprinted in the next *Kaleidoscope*.



Neil Wood-Gaiger models wool waistcoats, from £11.45.

local authorities.

The Society is represented by porch lamps, foldaway tables and cosmetic bags from Beaumont Products, Penarth, and by personalised stationery and a plant stand from the Kingston Spastics Work Centre.

For all its professional appearance, Countrywide Workshops is essentially a family affair. Valerie Wood-Gaiger, who thought up the idea, and cannot understand why nobody did it years ago, is responsible for choosing the goods, while one of her sons, Neil, who is in

Books

Social Work with Disabled People

by Michael Oliver
(BASW Practical Social Work Series, Macmillan, hardback £10, paperback £3.95).

A scholarly, basically well-researched book, that should make interesting reading for social workers unfamiliar with disability, though the ideas it expounds are not new.

The author quotes extensively from works by Vic Finkelstein and Ann Shearer, and it is on their theories that this book is based. His central thesis is that "... the social work task is no longer one of adjusting individuals to personal disasters but rather helping them to locate the personal, social, economic and community resources to enable them to live life to the full." To this end he introduces concepts such as "housing disability" and "information disability" as a more appropriate framework for social workers.

Michael Oliver is particularly anxious that social workers do not become "too accepting of the universality of grief processes." Although bereavement counselling may be appropriate in some cases, social workers should not assume that all disabled people and their families will react in this way. He advocates that they "start from the coping strategy of the family itself."

While always a stimulating read, I found the book curiously inconsistent in its practical application. The chapter on the Legal and Social Context of Disability is certainly thorough. Besides a useful summary of the legislation affecting disabled people, there are positive suggestions on possible roles for social workers, which include acting as advocates for parents seeking to enforce their legal rights under the Education Act 1981, and taking a practical and imaginative approach towards finding jobs for disabled clients.

In other chapters, however, questions are raised which are not satisfactorily answered. Disability in the Family criticises the social effects of segregated schooling without considering the alternatives in any depth. Later, while discussing the role of social workers in supporting "carers", he highlights the "potential ground for conflict over who the social worker might regard as a client and the dilemma of whose needs should take precedence when interests conflict. Advocating that social workers should "balance the need of all parties", he offers no clue as to how this might be done.

This is certainly an interesting alternative to the standard books on social work and disability, although I suspect it may leave many social workers more confused than ever.

Sue Kendall

Disability — Counting the Costs

by Linda Avery

(Disability Alliance, 25 Denmark Street, London WC2H 8NJ, 80p includes postage and packing).

This report provides not only an excellent guide to claiming Supplementary Benefit additional requirements, but also a damning insight into the problems which people with disabilities face in the SB system. It is the result of a pilot study carried out in 1982 into the suitability of SB additions for people with disabilities.

Supplementary Benefit was originally designed to provide a safety net for those who lacked National Insurance benefits but sadly it has now become the major means of survival for many, especially disabled, people.

Quotes such as, "As the DHSS isn't forthcoming with any diet addition, I can't afford to try the diet, so I don't know if it would help" or "I can just manage on the money given but I have no social life" are all too familiar to those who are closely involved with disabled people, particularly people living in the community alone or with families.

Many participants in the survey faced with the complex system of benefits failed to claim all of the allowances for which they are eligible. Evidence of the DHSS failing to encourage people to claim full benefit was also found. The survey provides personal details and histories.

Among other things, the report recommends the introduction of a comprehensive disability income and allowance as being the only realistic way of eliminating poverty amongst disabled people — a move endorsed by The Spastics Society. In the short-term, however, greater encouragement to claim existing allowances is essential if the Government is to be persuaded that an improvement in income for disabled people is needed.

The dual role of this report, as survey and guide, makes it an invaluable document for professional social policy experts and for disabled people themselves.

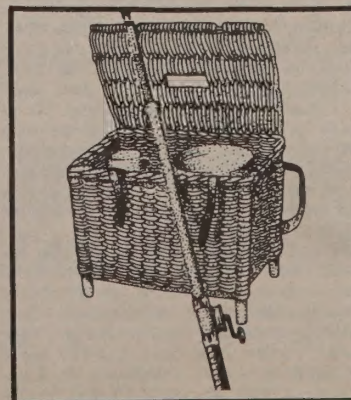
Amanda Jordan

1984 Good Toy Guide

(Published jointly by Play Matters/The Toy Libraries Association and Inter-Action Inprint. £3.95).

The 11th edition recommends over 700 toys, including 200 new ones. Each toy has been play-tested by children for about 3 months. Toys are arranged by type, giving a brief description, guide to suitable age-range, dimensions and approximate price. There is a section on toys for people with special needs, articles on how a child learns through play and on toy libraries.

Helen Gray



Willow fishing basket £19.55.

danger of losing his sight, has been responsible for the design of the catalogue and most of the photography.

"The skills, craftsmanship and diversity of products has amazed me", says Mrs. Wood-Gaiger. "What I hope to achieve for handicapped craftsmen is a show-case where people can see the goods, then make a fair comparison on price and quality".

The catalogue costs £1.50 incl. p and p from Countrywide Workshops, 17c Earls Court Square, London SW5 9BY.



Countrywide Workshops have just launched their second catalogue, a mouth-watering 64 pages of clothes, linens, toys, baby equipment, china, glass, woodwork, leatherwork and furniture. All the goods, over 700 of them, are made by disabled people working in their own homes or in workshops run by voluntary organisations or

Abolish discrimination, says Alliance

The process of evolving policies and campaigning strategy for the next five years — and ultimately the next General Election — has begun.

At the SDP Conference in Salford, 11-14 September, the poverty debate concentrated on the discussion document, *Social Security and Taxation*. One speaker criticised the document for not including more on disabled people, and this was acknowledged by the working party. The debate on citizens' rights re-affirmed the SDP's commitment to abolishing discrimination in all fields.

At the Liberal Party Assembly in Harrogate, 19-24 September, a Commission of party members spent over ten hours examining the party's policy on poverty and producing a final motion for debate in conference. Like the SDP, the Liberals are committed to a radical review of taxation and social security, and tax credits have been party policy for some time.

The wide ranging "poverty motion" included costs allowance for disabled people, wages for carers, greater education in welfare rights, increased benefits and redistribution of resources to redress environmental poverty.

Both partners in the Alliance want the abolition of the married man's tax allowance in favour of increased child benefit and the extension of Invalid Care Allowance to married women. But there was no reference in the motion to increasing maternity benefits, which The Spastics Society has identified as an important factor in reducing perinatal mortality and handicap.

The Liberal Party Assembly also debated a motion on the health service, which in some speakers' minds became confused with social security and social services. The main preoccupation was with the Government's announcement of cuts in health service budgets, but in the summing up reference was made to the plight of mentally handicapped people, particularly children, who live in long-stay hospitals. Commitment to Care in the Community programmes and working with voluntary organisations was reaffirmed.

More disabled people now attend conferences and take part in political debates.

Interpreters are available most of the time. The new Conference Centre at Harrogate is fully accessible to wheelchairs.



Amal paints a winner

Amal Ghanem of Ramsgate had a very important date in London's Oxford Street on 8 October. She came to see her own painting on display in Debenhams. Amal was one of over 5,000 children to enter the *Family Circle* magazine "Paint the Princess Competition", and her entry was judged to be one of the best 500. After a week on display in Oxford Street, the picture went to a regional exhibition at Debenhams in Croydon.

Amal, who is aged six and has cerebral palsy, explained how it all came about. "Mummy had a magazine and it had a competition to help playgroups. I had to paint a picture about Princess Diana meeting somebody. I painted Princess Diana and my Daddy. I tried very hard.

"I sent my picture away and they chose it as one of the best 500. They sent me a picture of Princess Diana, and a book-mark."

There can't be many artists who achieve a London exhibition so young!

Debenhams launch appeal to help The Society

Following an initiative by The Society, Debenhams retail group is launching a joint charities appeal this month on behalf of The Queen Elizabeth's Foundation for the Disabled, The Mental Health Foundation, Dr. Barnardo's, and ourselves.

October was selected as it is a key month for pre-Christmas trading. The appeal will be made to all Debenhams' account customers.

The purpose of bringing together a small consortium of charities was to widen the basis of the appeal. If it is successful, we hope it will become an annual event.



Douglas Arter Computer will help medical research

Microcomputers have so much to offer handicapped people that every residential centre and school would like to have its own. Douglas Arter Centre in Salisbury, which caters for 24 young adults, is one of the lucky ones. Thanks to the generosity of its Friends, whose chairman is Mrs. Joyce Smith, a BBC computer worth £1000 was installed last month.

The BBC is the model used in local authority primary schools. "It will be useful for our young people because there is a wide range of programmes and it can tackle basic numeracy and literacy", says John Adams, the Warden. "It also has the advantages of being totally objective and endlessly patient."

Already an "A" level student from the Salisbury College of Technology is working on a basic numeracy programme with a student from Douglas Arter, and links have been established with the Psychology Department at Southampton University.

John Adams sees other, more unusual, uses for the computer too. He is interested in a programme for severely handicapped people which has been devised by King Alfred's College in Winchester. "People with severe handicap have so little control over their environment. A programme could give them the chance to make decisions and it would develop their sequential thinking."

The computer will be used for medical research. It will monitor the long-term physical effects of sitting in a wheelchair. For several years John Adams has been interested in problems of posture. Now he has been joined by Dr. Austin Isherwood, the Centre's medical advisor, who has started a project to measure the degree of pressure and spinal curvature that take place. The computer will be able to display a graph and plot their measurements more accurately. The results will, they hope, influence the future design of wheelchairs.

From beer and sandwiches to wine and roses

It was not all hard work and hard thinking at the Wardens Conference at Castle Priory College last month. (In such setting, how could it be?) After a delicious dinner, there were warm speeches to mark the retirement of some well-known figures from the Centres Department: Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Lawton from Broadstones Hostel, Birmingham; Dr. Donald Gough, Consultant Psychiatrist; Mrs. Janet Molyneux from The Bedford Hotel, Clacton on Sea; Mr. Dexter Simpson from Buxton Centre, Derbyshire, and Mr. Jack Simmons from the Garwood Hotel, Bognor Regis (who could not be present.)

Michael Stopford thanked them for their loyalty and work over, in some cases, 20 years. He handed them manilla envelopes of "filthy lucre" — hoping that he hadn't by mistake made the cheques out to himself — and kissed the women. "The rest I don't have to kiss do I?"

Dr. Gough received a weighty bird bath from Jacques Hal. Dexter Simpson had some camera equipment.

In replying to Michael Stopford, he recalled the days "when the Centres Department was The Society" and The Society could afford only sandwiches and beer for its wardens' conference.

Conditions had improved for handicapped people and they must go on continuing. "We must go forward otherwise we stand still."

He thanked Michael Stopford for his support over the year and proposed a toast, "to the future of The Society". Mrs. Lawton added her appreciation.

Banks share cash dispensers

The National Westminster and the Midland are the first banks to introduce a shared cash dispenser. Customers from either bank will be able to draw cash by using a cash dispenser card or an Access card issued by these banks.

1,750 dispensers will be installed by the end of the year.

One is already at the new Sainsbury supermarket at Crystal Palace Football Club ground, Whitehorse Lane, South East London, along with other automatic banking services for customers who shop when banks are closed.

Sainsbury's has made all the machines accessible to wheelchair users.

Golfers raise £1,200 for SOS

Nearly 300 amateur golfers around the British Isles have helped to raise £1,200 for the Stars Organisation for Spastics. Moore Paragon UK Ltd sponsored its first Classic Golf Tournament to coincide with the introduction of Black Image Moore Clean Print (MCP) carbonless paper. Raffles were organised by eight regional

tournaments. Then on 24 September, 24 finalists competed at The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield, for the prize of an amateur place in the 1983 Boleyn Hope British Classic. Dickie Henderson, himself a keen golfer, was there to watch the match and receive the cheque from Jack Flowers, Managing Director of Moore Paragon.



Raising more than a few coppers!

Children from the Society's Rutland House School at Elm Bank, Nottingham, watched as ten drivers from the Nottingham Constabulary Traffic Department took the wheel of two MG Metro 1300 saloons for a 7½ hour endurance drive of 500 miles.

The event, which took place

at the Mallory Park circuit in September, raised in the region of £2,500 for the school's new nursery unit for multiply handicapped younger children. This was well over the original £2,000 target. The cars were donated by British Leyland, and the petrol by BP.

Spastics News

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HAVE A CHRISTMAS CRACKER!
Enjoy the Christmas Holidays at Colwall Court

Christmas is a time for fun and festivities, and where better to enjoy it than at Colwall Court, the Stars Organisations for Spastics' Holiday Hotel for children?

Situated 100 yards from the beach at Bexhill-on-Sea, Colwall Court is set in lovely private gardens and has these attractive features —

- heated covered swimming pool
- lounge with colour tv, radio and record player
- playroom with toys and games
- a coach for trips to the zoo, theatre and shopping
- films and Punch and Judy shows
- painting and crafts
- disco parties
- attractively decorated, well equipped and fully carpeted bedrooms

And at Christmas trips to the pantomime are arranged and Father Christmas makes a special visit. Colwall Court has a fully qualified staff, including night nurses and houseparents. It is conveniently located just two miles from Bexhill Station.

For Christmas bookings please contact the Manager immediately at Colwall Court, Pages Avenue, Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex. Telephone 0424 211491.

